We might 'overcome someday'

We Might "Overcome Someday": West Tennessee's Rural Freedom Movement

In rural West Tennessee during the winter of 1960-61, black families huddled in tents against the bitter cold. After being evicted from their homes, a few thousand men, women, and children set up makeshift homes in the tents with small stoves for warmth against the wind that blew unrelentingly through the tent flaps. "Tent City was a miserable life," one man recalled. "The tent was sixteen by fourteen… My wife and four kids livin[']' there. We had to cook in there, we had to sleep in there, we had to eat in there. And mud – when it rained in Tent City it got so bad on Tent City ground you had mud almost up to your knees." Many of those evicted were unsure whether to remain in the area, in the hope of returning to the land, or to leave for opportunities elsewhere. The same sharecropper "was never sorry [he] registered" to vote, as he hoped that he and his family might "overcome someday," but prospects did not seem promising. Ella Baker, a nationally-renowned civil rights activist, highlighted the contrast between American prosperity and the squalid living conditions many rural black Americans endured. "The real tragedy," she claimed, "is that in the wealthiest country in the world, in the jet-propelled atomic age of 1961, human beings could honestly say that their mud-floored tents were more comfortable than the shacks they formerly called 'home' for five, ten or thirty years."[1]

When African Americans sought to register to vote in large numbers from spring 1960 in rural Tennessee, the white economic squeeze was swift. By the end of 1960 alone, 257 black sharecroppers had been evicted from Fayette County with more than 700 sharecroppers evicted in neighboring Haywood County. Absolute numbers are difficult to ascertain, but perhaps 700 families were eventually evicted in these counties. In what briefly became a nationally-engaging civil rights story, many black families set up "Tent Cities" in these two counties.[2]

As media descended on Fayette and Haywood Counties in late 1960 and early 1961, it seemed that there was a chance for significant political and economic change for poor local African Americans. National civil rights organizations and labor unions across the country turned their attention onto these two rural counties in West Tennessee, documenting the mounting humanitarian crisis. International, national, and regional attention focused on this small rural area as a potential turning point in the civil rights movement, a moment where the optics of black disfranchisement, and white supremacist economic coercion and violence, matched with vivid images of families huddled together in tents to force federal intervention and political change in the Cold War-era Mississippi Delta. Several Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activists believed that the black freedom struggle in Fayette and Haywood Counties was a "watershed" moment, one that depicted vividly "the connection between poverty and civil rights." Specifically, the grassroots activism indicated "a new dawn of freedom [was] breaking through the age-old social, economic, and political discrimination that blighted the lives of both whites and Negroes in the South." But change was slow to come.[3]

This rural West Tennessee activism, greatly understudied in civil rights literature, provides an excellent case study for considering civil rights activism away from the period's most famous "classic" confrontations. In particular, this activism informs recent scholarship concerning the goals civil rights activists pursued, the roles of violence and non-violence in the black freedom struggle, the periodization of civil rights activism, and the tensions along race, gender, class, and generational lines among civil rights activists. Moreover, existing studies, though insightful, have relied upon a limited primary source base, be it newspaper articles, oral histories, or available court case summaries. In contrast, this article draws upon oral history evidence, archival materials from presidential collections, the activists' papers, and the recently-opened Tent City materials at the University of Memphis special collections

to reconstruct the freedom struggle in this locale, with a close focus on the interplay between local and outside activists in the early 1960s.[4] Power was spread across grassroots activists, local leadership, and partnerships between different local and national organizations. While activists affirmed a commitment to nonviolent direct action, armed self-defense had been a necessity for African Americans in this rural locale for decades. Generational differences concerning strategy featured prominently, particularly as focus shifted from voter registration and welfare relief to include the desegregation of public accommodations. Buffeted by differences in leadership, vision, and direction for the movement in 1963 and 1964, relationships between local activists and outside student groups became increasingly fraught. This fracture was not complete, however, as local African American activists, and sympathetic whites continued to pursue economic, political, and educational advances.[5]

This episode of West Tennessee civil rights activism highlights how grassroots organizing developed in the Deep South, and the place of indigenous local leadership within that struggle. This episode has more in common with Mississippi Delta activism than Memphis activism which was geographically close, but relatively insignificant to Fayette and Haywood County activists. In the late 1950s, Fayette and Haywood, 78% black and 62% black respectively, were Tennessee's only majority black counties; in the United States, only two other counties were poorer than Fayette County. Refocusing analysis of the civil rights movement on poor rural areas like Fayette and Haywood where black leaders campaigned for political, economic, and social gains highlights the interplay between local and outside groups. Complementing the work of scholars on other rural freedom struggles, despite the extensive involvement of national organizations in civil rights activism, local activists were the prime movers.[6]

Rural African Americans' efforts to register to vote marked a new phase in the black freedom struggle in West Tennessee. A mere seventeen Fayette County blacks had voted

between 1952 and 1959, out of a county population of nearly 17,000 African Americans. The location of the voter registration office was moved regularly by whites to dissuade potential black voters. Rev. June Dowdy recalled that when he asked where the office had moved to, he was told by white men "we'll register you in Hatchie Bottom," a heavily wooded area south of Brownsville, the county seat of Haywood that was known as a nearby location where blacks were lynched. Most notably, after the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter of Haywood County (in Brownsville) was established in 1939, the body of Elbert Williams, one of the members, was discovered in Hatchie River a year later. Beginning in May 1959, the Memphis NAACP chapter was heavily involved in creating a local initiative to encourage blacks to register to vote in Fayette County, and even earlier in Haywood County, in May 1940. From June 1959 Fayette County witnessed more than 2,000 African Americans registering to vote, and in the general election of 1960, more than 1,200 blacks voted in Fayette alone. For the first time since Reconstruction, Fayette County voted Republican. Viola McFerren, Fayette County resident and activist, stated that this was "when hell kicked off in Fayette County." While welfare leagues formed in subsequent years in both counties, their power (and subsequent success) was limited by the tenacity of white resistance to racial change in heavily black areas. In such a context, any meaningful grassroots activism in Fayette and Haywood Counties demonstrated the black community's strong socio-political network.[7]

The issue of federal involvement in southern segregated communities during the civil rights era was thorny. The Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had valid grounds for involving themselves in the protection of voting rights, were it not for the stranglehold local white leaders had on many regions including West Tennessee. Prior to the eviction of black sharecroppers from Fayette and Haywood Counties, the federal government had been aware of local white resistance to black voter registration. The U.S.

Commission on Civil Rights visited Brownsville, in Haywood County, then Somerville, in Fayette County, in May 1959 to investigate claims of voter intimidation. Following this investigation, using authority granted by the 1957 Civil Rights Act, the Department of Justice filed *United States v. Fayette County Democratic Executive Committee* on 16 November 1959, which accused the county's Democratic Executive Committee of denying blacks the opportunity to vote in the Democratic primary.[8]

Faced with continued disfranchisement, black residents of Fayette and Haywood Counties took matters into their own hands. The local black activists created community organizations, one in each county, in order to continue registering blacks to vote as early as the spring of 1959 and to form a local political machine. The Fayette County Civic and Welfare League and the Haywood County Civic Welfare League were created to address these issues on the local level. There were local leaders in both counties, John McFerren and Harpman Jameson of Fayette County, and Currie Boyd, of Haywood County, who attended the Volunteer Civil Rights Commission hearings on 31 January 1960 in Washington, D.C. Their presence at the hearings, organized by Ella Baker (then of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference [SCLC]) and Carl Braden of the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) as well as fifteen local civil rights and civic organizations, demonstrated that the local freedom struggle had reached a national audience. In February 1960, following his earlier legal work in Fayette County, Memphis African American lawyer and NAACP member James F. Estes and four league members drove to Washington to demand federal enforcement of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 against the evictions of the local black sharecroppers. The group met with Assistant Attorney General John Doar in Washington. They were ultimately successful in this endeavor when, on 14 December 1960, the Justice Department filed a case alleging some seventy persons (landowners, a bank, and local merchants) had violated the sharecroppers' civil rights.[9]

Furthermore, the leagues in Fayette and Haywood Counties tackled the situation of economic hardship for local blacks with an approach which would mirror later 1960s welfare relief efforts. In addition to providing immediate housing, legal advice, and economic relief for displaced sharecroppers, the leagues simultaneously distributed food (twice a week in Fayette), oversaw crop loans, funded scholarships for young people, paid medical bills, and worked on programs for adult education. These broader social relief efforts fell under a Fayette program called "Operation Bootstrap," which mainly focused on healthcare, small businesses, and adult education; the idea was that without a long-range program to support local blacks in their efforts towards self-sufficiency, efforts to register voters would not solve the larger problem of inequality. However, as the Fayette league articulated, "our primary objective is to register Negroes in this county."[10]

As the sharecroppers faced increasing hardships, the sight of African Americans forced into homelessness reflected poorly on the federal government, a key concern during the Cold War era. The Kennedy administration was particularly worried that "vivid photographs" of the black sharecroppers would be "used against the United States in the rest of the world." Nationally, the African American magazine *Ebony* connected the Cold War and inequalities faced by West Tennessee blacks in its September 1960 story entitled, "Cold War in Fayette County." One black minister from Detroit who visited the area described the situation in Tent City as "really good grist for the Communists."[11]

The situation remained dire for those already displaced and living in tents. Their location left them exposed to harassment and violence from local whites, meaning that armed self-defense was sometimes a necessity. John McFerren, under a microscope due to his leadership role locally, recalled that in driving to Memphis every few days to stock his store, the local White Citizens' Council "chased me just about every time." The most frequently-related account of violence towards blacks living in Tent City is the shooting of Early B.

Williams on 28 December 1960. Williams was asleep in a tent with his family when he was hit by bullets fired by whites driving by the site. Reportedly, shots were returned from the tents in response, and Williams was driven to the hospital by armed guard. The displaced sharecroppers also faced continued unemployment. The White Citizens' Council in Fayette blacklisted evicted black sharecroppers. These blacks could neither buy necessary food products nor receive assistance or goods from whites. As an article in the *Chicago Defender* detailed, the embargo included an "illegal denial of federal crop loans, foreclosures, evictions, refusals to sell food and gasoline to blacklisted Negroes, and refusal to provide the Negroes health and medical services." This embargo on necessary products began in April 1960, following the registration of hundreds of black voters in March 1960. Haywood County whites organized a similar blacklist during the summer of 1960.[12]

At the Memphis NAACP chapter's urging, the national organization took a stand against the embargo on 8 July 1960. Major oil companies including Gulf, Texaco, Amoco, and Esso Standard (now Exxon) participated in the embargo. Consequently, the NAACP had its state offices and its local and youth chapters encourage a counter boycott of these oil companies. Within a single week of the NAACP's press release calling for a boycott, the organization was in communication with the companies to resolve the issue.[13]

Beginning in December 1960, donations of food and other basic, necessary items like clothing and medicine were donated to the local area to relieve unemployed and displaced blacks from the colder weather and the economic embargo. The Kennedy administration provided surplus food for the former residents through the Department of Agriculture when the donations from private organizations could not meet demand. One Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) activist estimated 3,500 people were "dependent on outside aid" (1,400 adults and 2,100 children) in January 1961. Black communities in both counties needed these materials but lacked a pre-existing system to feasibly receive the items and distribute them to

locals, with the local welfare leagues filling this void. Made up of African American leaders, in particular businessowners John McFerren of Fayette and Odell Sanders of Haywood, these welfare leagues were central to resistance. Despite facing allegations from the area's white leadership of misappropriating the donations, the community leagues continued to oversee the acceptance and distribution of the necessary items on behalf of the displaced sharecroppers.[15]

What developed from the combination of local activism and national donations was a network between local activists and various socially- and politically-minded organizations, namely the NAACP, CORE, the National Sharecroppers Fund, and the American Friends Service Committee. This combination bore similarities to the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), composed of local and national groups operating in Mississippi during Freedom Summer in 1964. In 1960, CORE chapters formed "Emergency Relief Committees for Fayette and Haywood Counties" to raise money nationally for those living in Tent City. James Forman, soon to be SNCC's first executive secretary, travelled from Chicago to assist the displaced blacks in Tent City as a CORE representative in December 1960. Forman declared to the Associated Press that "these undemocratic elements in our society will think twice before they start another economic boycott against Negroes in the South who want to register." Labor unions including the United Automobile Workers (UAW), the Teamsters, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), United Packinghouse, Food, and Allied Workers Union (UPWA), and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), sent representatives and supplies to the area to aid those displaced. The AFL-CIO gave "run money" to sharecroppers who had land to work but were affected by the economic boycott, and therefore unable to obtain subsistence funds between planting and harvesting.[16]

In addition to these organizations, SNCC had a substantial role in the civil rights movement in West Tennessee. The strength of the grassroots activism in the area, its proximity to civil rights protests in the Mississippi Delta, and the publicity of evicted black sharecroppers and disfranchised locals organizing into welfare leagues all indicated that West Tennessee was a place to keep an eye on. Indeed, SCEF member and civil rights activist Anne Braden believed SNCC was interested in West Tennessee "because it is a good project" and that it tied "in well with Mississippi." SNCC members were involved in the area's activism from as early as winter 1960, when Casey Hayden and others arranged a food drive for the displaced sharecroppers; the organization's newspaper *The Student Voice* dedicated a number of stories to the situation and urged its readers to donate their time, clothing, food, or funds to the cause. SNCC members felt this was an important initiative at the time, but they would also recall this drive years later as an impetus for their activism in civil rights efforts across the South. Students who came from outside the area to work formed connections with SNCC, including Walter Tillow who went on to work for the organization, and young activists from the area who formed local organizations also affiliated themselves with SNCC; one such group was the Fayette County Council for Christian Action which allied with SNCC in the summer of 1963. Local groups like this council received funding, wider recognition, and access to SNCC's media engine when they affiliated with SNCC; the West Tennessee Voters Project in particular used the SNCC WATS [Wide Area Telephone Service] to spread news about their work in West Tennessee in the early to mid-1960s. This association, however, added to the concerns of some older Fayette activists that SNCC would, in the words of student activist Danny Beagle, "sort of bomb into the county and take things over." Into the spring of 1965, the West Tennessee Voters Project continued to pursue the idea of SNCC funding a West Tennessee project that would stretch out from Fayette and Haywood into the surrounding counties of Hardeman, Shelby, Tipton, and Haywood to help blacks in

those counties to organize their own freedom movements. By March 1965, they joined with "local indigenous leadership" and fostered "agitators" from Fayette specifically to move into those other regional counties.[17]

Conditions for blacks in Fayette and Haywood Counties worsened over the next year; the majority of evicted sharecroppers and their families lived in tents from 1959 to 1962. Although sharecropper evictions continued quietly, civil rights initiatives increasingly focused on segregated public facilities as well as the longer-standing stresses on voter registration and economic advancement. Local activists and newly-arrived outsiders drove this shift.[18]

This next period of local activism was marked by youth participation in conjunction with the established, ongoing adult-led movement. The phase encompassed two stages: first, the influx of white northern college students into the area to work on voter registration and community improvement projects, and second, the organization of local black youths (with some white college student participation) to target segregated public accommodations in the two counties.[19]

Initial publicity about Tent City drew several college students without institutional connections to Tennessee to the area, before program organizing was fully underway. A student from New Mexico State University, Bob Plese, was likely the first white student from outside the South to come to the area, early in 1961. Plese worked, as students after him would, on voter registration. Students from the University of Michigan travelled to bring food and clothing to Haywood County in early February 1961 but were arrested on traffic charges. Police released them from jail on the condition that they leave the county, but not before a deputy sheriff "slugged" a photographer for the University of Michigan newspaper for snapping the deputy's photograph without his consent. In spring 1961, two college students from Cleveland, Ohio, Charles Butts, who was white, and Gilbert Moses, who was

black, travelled to West Tennessee to witness the registration drive's progress. Also that spring, white Fisk University professor Nelson Fuson and two young black activists, Leo Lillard and J. Metz Rollins, drove from Nashville, Tennessee to deliver items they had collected from friends, including food and household goods. In November 1961, Kennedy's administration received reports of a student and minister arrested in Brownsville, Tennessee for trying to give clothing to displaced black Haywood County sharecroppers. In the words of a fellow minister, the minister and student were arrested "on concocted charges and in a secret hearing" and fasted while in jail.[20]

The national publicity of the West Tennessee voter registration drives and the increased interest in broader civil rights organizing contributed to the establishment of three organizations which facilitated assistance to West Tennessee from outside the state. The first, Operation Freedom, was made up of social and religious organizations from around the country including CORE and the SCEF, and sent thousands of dollars in donations to the West Tennessee efforts. Formed in October 1961, Operation Freedom's first project was to send financial assistance to Fayette County. The program's membership included well-known civil rights activists such as Ella Baker, Carl and Ann Braden, C. T. Vivian of Nashville and Myles Horton of Highlander Folk School, a training school for radical southern labor and civil rights organizing in Tennessee. The funding from Operation Freedom dramatically declined after the organization decided to broaden its focus to the Mississippi Delta in 1962, but it continued to give local blacks loans for purchasing crops and related farm equipment, as well as for home financing.[21]

The organization's decision to widen its activism inspired Virgie Hortenstine, vice-chairman of Operation Freedom and a white, Quaker, Cincinnati housewife, to found the Fayette Haywood Work Camps Inc. in late November 1962. The workcampers, as they were called, travelled to the West Tennessee counties and assisted local black residents with

specific community tasks, like pouring concrete or construction. According to Minnie Jameson, a Fayette County Civic and Welfare League member, Hortenstine's efforts to bring students to the area began with building a community center; the students' travel was funded between the money they raised before going to Tennessee as well as local donations. Hortenstine coordinated funding from various religious and social groups from the Midwest and Northeast, including the Baptist Ministers Conference of Cincinnati, Race Relations Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends (a Quaker organization), Cincinnati Chapter of Operation Freedom, International Voluntary Service, Miami (Ohio) Quarterly Meeting of Friends, and Philadelphia Friends Social Order Committee.[22]

The third organization involved in on-the-ground activism was the West Tennessee Voters Project, based out of Cornell University. In many ways, the establishment of Cornell as a hub for civil rights training developed organically. As Lisa Anderson Todd, a Cornell student and participant in Mississippi's Freedom Summer who caught a ride south with fellow students headed to Fayette County would later say, "My stand for civil rights was not difficult or controversial for me in the supportive environment at Cornell, where other progressive students were also becoming activists for civil rights." Campus talks with Cornell students who had worked in civil rights efforts and returned to campus as well as widely-recognized leaders such as James Forman of SNCC fostered an environment for students to be introduced to, and moved by, opportunities to work in the South. Launched by Charles Haynie, a former Cornell student, other northern white students, and a Cornell professor named Douglas Dowd, the West Tennessee Voters Project functioned solely to assist the ongoing voter registration drives in Fayette County. Haynie had attended a SNCC conference in spring 1963 where he met longtime white activist Anne Braden, who encouraged him to join in West Tennessee activism. He visited the area with his wife during the summer in 1963, and returned north that autumn. Haynie had connections with other

non-southern white activists including University of Wisconsin students Bob and Vicki Gabriner and Danny Beagle, a Cornell graduate and Wisconsin graduate student in 1965. The group's work in West Tennessee began in the summer of 1964 and continued through 1966. It founded a Freedom School to promote literacy education and provide political training, an approach that mirrored SNCC's local organizing efforts in Deep South states. Indeed, the project participants were a combination of white northern college students, many of whom had SNCC connections, and local black activists; figures in the summer of 1965 hovered around forty project members, ten of whom were locals. When the majority of students left to attend school in August 1964, Debby Rib, a University of Wisconsin graduate, remained as the Fayette County on-site coordinator to plan for the upcoming year.[23]

Students from outside Tennessee who participated in the workcamps during this direct-action focused phase defined themselves as civil rights workers. They brought an understanding of the potential life-threatening consequences of their actions as well as a missionary (and sometimes culturally-insensitive) approach to their work. Many of them had previous experience in other southern efforts, such as Michael Tobin, a student at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who wrote to Bob Gabriner to ask to participate in the Fayette County Project in April 1965 and highlighted his participation in the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama march the previous month. Gabriner subsequently questioned Tobin's commitment to the project, to which Tobin replied, "I'd be a fool to say that I wouldn't be scared. However, I'd be more of a fool to think that Fayette County is going to be a picnic." Tobin continued, "I have not minimized the possibility of danger and I am prepared to commit myself under these conditions…. I would be willing to do whatever you or Danny [Beagle] feel I should do." Tobin mirrored the reasons many students, northern and southern, gave during this period for participating in Freedom Summer, the Freedom Rides, and other similar endeavors. Deborah Cohen, a University of Chicago

sophomore, also wrote Gabriner in April 1965 to ask to participate in the project that summer. Cohen cited her previous work with SNCC, CORE, American Friends, and the Harlem Education Project in Chicago, Indianapolis, Indiana, and New York as her experience in similar initiatives, work that prepared her well, she believed, for West Tennessee.[24]

Students who participated in the project were selected for their political involvement and past activism, where relevant. Most young activists were from middle class white backgrounds and were students at northeastern and midwestern colleges and universities, similar to the makeup of Freedom Summer participants. Students from across the country came as workcampers, often for a summer or spring break, from a broad swath of colleges and universities including public universities in the Midwest and smaller liberal arts colleges in the Midwest and Northeast. They stayed with local black families during their time in the area, and brought their own food to prevent being a financial burden on their hosts. The majority of them were drawn South by the publicity surrounding the sit-in demonstrations in the early 1960s. A political report describing proposed activism described the ideal candidates as "Workers experienced in political organization and/or the civil rights movement as necessary." Furthermore, "Both white and Negro organizers are needed preferably with stable and mature personalities. Local paid workers will be Negro with a good background in political organization and at least some experience in working on elections in Fayette County." Project organizers sought politically-inclined and experienced young people, with whites as the outsiders and blacks of equal position within the project but from the local area.[25]

In the summer of 1963, an established network of white student workcampers and SNCC activists in Fayette and Haywood Counties began to push for desegregating public accommodations, in addition to continuing the voter registration drive. In Fayette, thirty-eight Somerville black high school students marched towards the courthouse in mid-June,

singing as they walked, and were stopped by Sheriff Clarence Pattat before reaching their intended destination. One of the visiting white college students recorded their altercation with Pattat, which featured the black youths' strong defense of their actions. When Pattat demanded to know what they thought they were doing, especially as they were marching without a permit, one female student said, "we are marching for our freedom," and "we're our own leaders." Many of these black students were the children of newly-registered residents of Fayette County, which suggests that their arguments may have come from conversations at home. One of these young black demonstrators, Minnie Jameson's nephew James, attributed his interest in the activity to Minnie and her husband Harpman's influence, both of whom were heavily involved in the Fayette County Civic and Welfare League.[26]

As the protest strategy became more confrontational, some local whites became more violent in response. Somerville, for example, deputized a number of white men after the high school students' march in mid-June 1963, and by August the police were using fire hoses and tear gas to disperse protestors. The municipal government passed a curfew ordinance in an unsuccessful effort to stop the number of demonstrators from growing. Consequently, more than fifty protestors were arrested. In Brownsville (Haywood County) on 3 August, recently deputized men confronted a civil rights protest at the courthouse. In addition to releasing a dog on one young woman, they poured a chemical directly onto another protestor. Edna Mae Jones' wounds from the dog attack and Eric Weinberger's chemical burns led CORE to contact Assistant Attorney General Burke Marshall to request a federal investigation. The escalation of demonstrations and the violent reaction to them threatened to open the area up to unwelcome national media coverage on a level not seen since the mass eviction of sharecroppers a few years earlier.[27]

The West Tennessee Voters Project organized specifically to help register black voters in Fayette County, and during the summer of 1964, project members identified their

major test: the 7 August 1964 county general election. By assigning project members to each of the fifteen election districts, the project canvassed the area to register residents up to 1 July 1964, the final day for voter registration prior to the election. Each district was then split into smaller areas, called sections, each with its own leader, named a section leader. In this sense, project members hoped to build upon what they identified as "indigenous leadership" in the area and create a political system that could continue after they left the county. Section leaders led two meetings during the summer with between ten and fifteen voters in attendance; the first of these meetings, which lasted about an hour, pertained to the candidates running for election and answering questions about voting procedures. The second meeting centered on broader subjects such as the upcoming presidential election and federal civil rights legislation. The project also sent students to nearby counties to organize similar grassroots registration programs.[28]

By the county election in August 1964, white and black voter registration numbers were approximately even (3,500 each), and out of the fifteen election districts, eleven of them were majority black. In the county general election, two men affiliated with Fayette activism ran for positions in Fayette government; L. T. Redfearn, a sympathetic white landowner, ran for sheriff, and Rev. June Dowdy, an African American, ran for the position of tax assessor. Dowdy's election was the first time in living memory that a black candidate ran for a position in Fayette County. In the general election on 3 November 1964, African American Earl Maclin ran as an independent for Congress. These candidates were not elected, but the results from the elections, the county one in August in particular, indicated that efforts to organize and register new voters brought incremental gains.[29]

Around the November election in particular, there were additional concerns over political organizing for local black leaders which white students did not always notice. Older black leaders in West Tennessee feared the potentially radical direction outside student-led

activism promised to take, and this was clear in the discussions locals had about potential collaboration with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). After some white members of the West Tennessee Voters Project and local Fayette African Americans met with Fannie Lou Hamer, Bob Moses, and Dave Dennis from the COFO at the Freedom Democratic Party convention in Chicago in August 1964, questions about the differences in direction emerged. The West Tennessee Voters Project thought the chance for the Fayette movement to be linked with the MFDP would be beneficial, specifically the opportunity to receive additional funding and trained staff and potentially establishing a West Tennessee Freedom Democratic Party. The Fayette movement activists who travelled with them to Chicago agreed. Questions remained in the wider West Tennessee movement, however, about how much the local organizing should associate itself with establishment politics. This ideological difference paralleled the tensions that emerged after MFDP failed to unseat the all-white Democratic state delegation for the party convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. In West Tennessee, it would influence the direction of the movement. A Nashville lawyer who represented the West Tennessee Voters Project and Fayette league's legal interests in the summer of 1964, Whitworth Stokes, Jr., described the change in perspective of local Fayette activists' focus for the future as more of a "great disappointment based on unrealistic expectations," attributing it more to a difference in perspective that influenced the local movement's focus, rather than personal or generational tensions. After August 1964, when he was retained solely by the Fayette movement, Stokes noted that local black activists "were determined to continue their efforts" without the help of students "even though they knew it was not going to be an easy, or short, struggle."[30]

The West Tennessee freedom struggle further highlights the coexistence of non-violent protest and armed self-defense before the mid-1960s. Attacks on white and black youth activists increased, but the reality for African Americans living in the area had already

been one of armed self-defense as a necessity. In Fayette, John McFerren would stand guard overnight with a "sawed off shot gun" while his family slept inside. In Haywood, John Frank Bond reported that following a cross burning in his yard, he slept with a loaded shotgun at the head of his bed. One white SNCC activist declared that "Nonviolence is irrelevant here," while a reporter from the North observed that "everyone – Negro and white – is armed," "Negroes have nothing to lose," and that black youths carried "some kind of weapon… at all times – a knife, a razor, a tire chain or a gun." Militant white segregationists and police used baseball bats, pocket knives, hot coffee, sticks, dogs, cattle probes, tear gas, and even acid and liniment as weapons. Most of the media accounts that workcampers released described both "hoodlum attacks" or unorganized mob violence alongside more coordinated assaults, and pinpointed local whites, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), and local law enforcement as the assailants. White SNCC activist Casey Hayden recalled that on a trip to Fayette and Haywood Counties to deliver food donations in spring 1961, she and her later husband Tom Hayden were "chased" out of Fayette and Haywood Counties by "angry white men… at gunpoint." This was after she had called the police, who then "joined the toughs" and chased them for fifty miles.[31]

Direct action protests escalated between May and August 1965, as tensions within local leadership simultaneously mounted. Disagreements highlighted tactical and generational differences. When James Gray, a seventeen-year-old vice-president of the Fayette County Student Union, was stabbed during a protest including fifty black students and four white students in Somerville, Tennessee on 3 May 1965, Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth, the president of SCEF, beseeched Tennessee Governor Frank G. Clement to "act immediately" to ensure the safety of these young civil rights workers. Here the "student union" denoted a group of black youths in the local area, probably of high school age. Robert Horton, one of the Fayette league members and one of the few adults who participated in the

public demonstrations, remembered that in the same incident when Gray was stabbed, he, Debby Rib, and Danny Beagle were at The Hut, a local restaurant. They were drinking at the counter when a white man named Julian Pulliam poured hot coffee over Horton's head. That same week, local whites beat Danny Beagle and his brother Peter with baseball bats at a nearby drug store and accosted another white student, Tim Hall, in a restaurant as the protestors organized a week-long series of demonstrations. A league member in Fayette County and Robert Horton's wife, Maggie Mae Horton, recalled that during the attack on the Beagles, "I went screamin['] then for someone to come… [while the man who attacked the Beagles], a bad sonofagun, he was standin['] there with his bat drawed back and I just moved the bat over and I went in the door." Protestors targeted segregated restaurants in Somerville and soon broadened their focus to the nearby towns of Braden, Rossville, and Moscow.[32]

In June 1965, harassment of young civil rights workers continued to escalate as the West Tennessee Voters Project organized additional targeted attacks on public accommodations. Two West Tennessee Voters Project workers, Jerry Jenkins, a local black youth, and Neil Varian, a white volunteer, were "physically hauled" out of a restaurant in Hardeman County at the intersection of Route 100 and Road 64, near the town of Whiteville. Organizers planned a larger, integrated protest for the next day. A few days later, civil rights workers in Haywood County reported "a lot of harrassment [*sic*]" from local whites.[33]

The violence against civil rights demonstrators escalated into July, as a successful coalition of school-aged children, youth volunteers, and adult activists brought a boycott of area schools and effective public accommodations protests. On 10 July, Tennessee National Guard members reportedly cursed and threw rocks at some forty Haywood County Student Union and West Tennessee Voters Project members while they integrated the Brownsville municipal pool. A cross was burned on the Covington, Tennessee property of the movement leader in Tipton County on 11 July.[34]

In living with black community members, white students were somewhat integrated into the grassroots activism, and at times benefited from armed protection, often at great personal risk to their African American hosts. Recalling events from July 1965, one Cornell University student noted that after the KKK burned a cross burned on their property, fifteen African American men who had heard about the incident on WDIA Memphis radio came to protect the students, "heavily armed – our own Deacons of Defense." The student was referring to the Deacons for Defense and Justice, a Deep South group of African Americans who advocated for armed self-defense for community protection. In mid to late July, a Cornell University student described attacks on project workers involving beatings, including one with a pot that was so forceful that it broke a protestor's jaw. The local police later claimed they did not see the attack and suggested that the man's jaw had already been broken before the altercation. This attack in Brownsville on 23 July was followed by a Covington protest the next day that drew an incredible 1,000 marchers despite 103-degree heat.[35]

At the beginning of August, a school boycott of the Fayette County Training School in Fayette County was called; this boycott demonstrated the breadth of activists' demands. Out of 1,200 students registered, on the first day of the boycott, 2 August, only 300 students attended classes. By the third day, about sixty-five per cent of students remained at home. Fayette County protestors, in fact, were brought to court over their participation in the boycott, but thanks to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the county judge sided with the demonstrators. Those who participated in the school boycotts also faced more informal coercion from the Somerville-based welfare department, such as restrictions to their access to welfare and food aid. On 7 August, a Brownsville demonstration including West Tennessee Voters Project members and Haywood County Student Union members brought a few hundred marchers despite heavy rain and the presence of Tennessee state troopers. This was the largest protest of its kind to date in the town. The demonstrators presented Julian K.

Welch, Brownsville's mayor, with four demands: increased job security for African American police and equal protection of protestors by Brownsville police; improved school conditions including "[more money for] books, hot lunches, more school buses, and better roads;" desegregation of Brownsville theaters, cafes, and recreational accommodations, including the reopening of the county swimming pool as an integrated facility; and "fair employment in all factories and government jobs."[36]

Mirroring the events of Freedom Summer in Mississippi a year before, the violent attacks against civil rights protestors in Fayette and Haywood County, particularly the white youth activists from outside the South, garnered national attention. After three white students sustained particularly serious attacks towards the end of July, a group of twelve concerned parents and Douglas Dowd, the Cornell professor and Fayette County Project chairman (part of the West Tennessee Voters Project), travelled from the New York area to Washington, D.C. to call for federal protection of their work in West Tennessee. Following their meeting with John Doar, the head of the Civil Rights Division at the Justice Department and several congressmen, including Senator Jacob Javits (R-NY), the parents urged Tennessee governor Frank G. Clement and the mayor of Brownsville to provide further protection for their children. Bob Gabriner soon explicitly compared local law enforcement negligence in West Tennessee with Freedom Summer, in a press release about the attempted restraining order and injunction. In the release, "Gabriner (former Cornell roommate of murdered Civil Rights Worker, Mickey Schwerner)," announced: "We are doing everything in our power to get sufficient protection from federal, state, county, and local public officials on Saturday [7 August protest]… to prevent any disaster occurring similar to the Chaney, Goodman and Schwerner murders in Mississippi last summer."[37]

Like Mississippi's 1964 Freedom Summer which faced accusations of interracial sexual relations between participants, activists in West Tennessee were equally concerned

about the potential condemnation of such behavior. During the summer of 1964, after a night of "drinking and disgraceful behavior," eleven students participating in the West Tennessee Voters Project were sent home. The peak of these concerns occurred during the next summer when, as Vicki Gabriner described, white female project members were "indiscreet" about interracial relationships and white male project participants were "really hung up on Negro girls." These interactions were, in her words, "detrimental to their work." Three more students with West Tennessee Voters Project were dismissed for what was described as "sexual immorality" at the time. Members of the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League and the West Tennessee Voters Project clashed in the summer, with the student activists reporting that league members "have been talking against the [project members], charging that they are Communist, that they are a bunch of white people trying to take over, that they are there only for sex." Debby Rib alleged that "NAACP folks and others who could be helpful" financially to the West Tennessee Voters Project "will really avoid you like the plague if they believe there has been something to do with 'SEX' happening." In later years, Charles Haynie recalled the situation slightly differently in defending the project's decision to dismiss participants amidst the accusations of sexual impropriety. "…We agreed to be governed by the behavior patterns that were acceptable to the black leaders who invited us there," he said. "This was their county, not ours." These questions about the morality of younger activists exposed underlying tensions along generational, race, and class lines. They also suggest that white outsiders might have underestimated the salience of interracial sexual allegations in the region.[38]

The "new dawn of freedom" predicted at the beginning of the Fayette and Haywood Counties movement never fully materialized, but the activism was still impactful, if incremental. In 1971, the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League recalled with pride that their accomplishments included higher voter registration in the area, financial and

employment assistance for members of the community, and federal assistance in the form of Head Start and Neighborhood Youth Corps programs and funding for job training and loans. Viola McFerren was instrumental in bringing Head Start to Fayette, having drafted the initial proposal for the program in 1964, and in 1966 she was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to the National Advisory Committee of the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity. The area's activism also had an impact on future generations' self-awareness and political aspirations.[39]

Local African Americans faced an arduous path towards racial advancement even after the West Tennessee projects, but the experience radicalized both the students who participated in the demonstrations as well as those from the area. For non-southern white students, involvement in civil rights activity in West Tennessee and other Deep South areas in 1964 galvanized the New Left as college students returned to their campuses invigorated by their experiences. Many of those who were involved in Fayette, Haywood, and other surrounding counties organized fundraising drives and gave talks at their colleges and universities. Others, like Bob and Vicki Gabriner and Charles Haynie returned to the area and remained active in organizing students in subsequent years. Two other college students demonstrate the personal connection some young participants felt to the area in making multiple return trips. Tim Hall, a native of Ohio, was a Cornell student when he first visited West Tennessee as part of the university's project. Following the 1964 election, Hall stayed in Fayette County for a while to collect affidavits for U.S. Attorney John Doar alleging election fraud against the county's black candidates. After time away, he returned to Fayette in May 1965 to participate in the Somerville sit-ins and assist Fayette County Student Union members to publish their local newspaper, *West Tennessee Freedom Train*. Hall made a final trip in the summer of 1966 to assist in Fayette County elections. Dean Hansell, a student at Denison University in Ohio, worked in Fayette County on some fifteen different occasions

beginning in 1971, during which he taught in Fayette freedom schools on law in Tennessee, worked in freedom libraries in Fayette and Haywood, and helped with the construction of the Rossville Health Clinic.[40]

The West Tennessee movement embodied the challenges facing many rural southern activists; the tensions within the local movement mirrored those evident in the national civil rights coalition by the middle of the decade. Beyond the struggles of local people for civil rights in Fayette and Haywood Counties, a national network of pro-civil rights organizations and mostly white non-southern students provided economic relief and shelter to displaced sharecroppers who had sought the franchise. Peaceful protest methods coexisted with armed self-defense, while intergenerational and interracial disagreements were (mostly) held in check through 1964. And though access to the ballot box drove this phase of activism, voting was understood as only part of the broader African American struggle for political, social, and economic advancement. As in Mississippi, civil rights activists in Fayette and Haywood Counties eventually prevailed on federal authorities to protect black voter registration efforts, at least to a limited extent. Their gains were incremental, bitterly-resisted, and incomplete.

[1] Robert Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell: Fayette County, Tennessee: An Oral History of the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York, NY 1973), 74 [first and second quotations from this source]; Richard L. Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress: Voting Rights and the Contests Over Social Place and Civil Society in Tennessee's Fayette and Haywood Counties, 1958-1964," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Memphis (2012), 132, 134, 147; "Fayette Timeline – 1960," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1960.php (accessed 5 March 2020); Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill, NC and London 2003), 276 [third quotation from this source]; Ella Baker, "Tent City: Freedom's Front Line," *The Southern*

Patriot 19 (February 1961): 1; J. Todd Moye, *Ella Baker: Community Organizer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Lanham, MD 2013), 125.

2 One account says there were about thirty families in the Haywood tent city. [Richard A. Couto, *Lifting the Veil: A Political History of Struggles for Emancipation* (Knoxville, TN 1993), 202.] Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 6; "Haywood County History," February 1964, 3, Folder 31: Operation Freedom Papers, Box 16 (Tent Cities: Fayette and Haywood Counties civil rights collection, Preservation and Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis; hereinafter cited as TCC); James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (Seattle, WA and London 2000), 126. Emphasizing the civil rights focus of the sharecroppers' efforts, the Fayette County site was also known as "Freedom City," "Freedom Tent City," and "Freedom Village" in media accounts and recollections alike. Multiple contemporary sources reference this, including "Sit-Ins Near Anniversary; 'Freedom City' Drive On," *The Student Voice*, Vol. II, No. I, January 1961, Wisconsin Historical Society Library Microforms Room, N82-521. Available at: http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll2/id/50279 in the Freedom Summer Digital Collection, Wisconsin Historical Society (accessed 5 March 2020); hereinafter cited as WHS). Two secondary sources reference "Freedom Tent City" specifically. [Moye, *Ella Baker*, 124-126, and Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 275-276.] Families first moved into tents erected on the twenty-acre field owned by African American farmer Shepard Towles by December 1960, with the overflow later moving to a nearby property owned by African American Gertrude Beasley. Beasley's farm was kept a secret from anyone who did not need a place to stay, due to concerns for residents' safety. The farm was located in Moscow, in Fayette County, located off Tenn. 57. The Towles farm land is still in the Towles family today, located on Tenn. 195. ["Tent City," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 8A-9A, Box 6, TCC; Jacque Hillman, "Threatened every

day," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 9A, Box 6, TCC; "Background Information on Fayette County," n.d., Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC.]

3 Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)'s James Forman, Ella Baker, Jane Stembridge, and John Lewis specifically drew this connection. Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, first quote (from Jane Stembridge) on 275 and second quote (from Ella Baker) on 277.

4 There is an extensive literature addressing the movement's periodization. See especially Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1233-1263; Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The 'Long Movement' as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies," *Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 265-288. The notable exception to this is Richard L. Saunders' PhD dissertation, which utilized a number of available special collections across the country, but which did not include the Tent City Collection as it was not catalogued in 2012 when the dissertation was completed. See Saunders, "Encouraged By A Little Progress."

5 Letter from Virgie Hortenstine to Minnie Jameson, 3 November 1963, Folder 22: Thornberry, package 6 (Minnie Jameson), Box 13, TCC; Letter from Charlie Butts to Roy Wilkins, 31 March 1969, Folder 34: NAACP Records, Box 12, TCC. The Fayette league experienced disagreements in 1961 over its direction, resulting in a number of original members leaving and forming their own league, named the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League. ["Tent City," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 8A-9A, Box 6, TCC.]

6 See especially Greta de Jong, A Different Day: African American Struggles for Justice in Rural Louisiana (Chapel Hill, NC 2002); chapter 8. Research on Fayette and Haywood includes the following sources: Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*; Linda T. Wynn,

"Toward A Perfect Democracy: The Struggle of African Americans in Fayette County, Tennessee, to Fulfill the Unfulfilled Right of the Franchise," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (Fall 1996); Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress;" Couto, *Lifting the Veil*; Jo Zanice Bond, "Race, Place and Family: Narratives of the Civil Rights Movement in Brownsville, Tennessee, and the Nation," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Kansas (2011); Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, 116-145; Members of the Fayette County Project, Douglas Dowd and Mary Nichols, eds., *Step By Step* (New York, NY 1965); Aeron Haynie and Timothy S. Miller, eds., *A Memoir of the New Left: The Political Autobiography of Charles A. Haynie* (Knoxville, TN 2009). For some of the relevant Deep South studies, please see especially Hasan Kwame Jeffries, *Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt* (New York, NY and London 2009); Emilye Crosby, *A Little Taste of Freedom: The Black Freedom Struggle in Claiborne County, Mississippi* (Chapel Hill, NC 2005); Emilye Crosby (ed.), *Civil Rights History from the Ground Up: Local Struggles, a National Movement* (Athens, GA and London 2011); J. Todd Moye, *Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Organizing in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986* (Chapel Hill, NC 2004); Chris Myers Asch, *The Senator and the Sharecropper: The Freedom Struggles of James O. Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York, NY and London 2008); Alison Collis Greene, *No Depression in Heaven: The Great Depression, the New Deal, and the Transformation of Religion in the Delta* (Oxford and New York, NY 2016); Erik S. Gellman and Jarod Roll, *The Gospel of the Working Class: Labor's Southern Prophets in New Deal America* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, IL 2011); Jarod Roll, *Spirit of Rebellion: Labor and Religion in the New Cotton South* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, IL 2010); Françoise N. Hamlin, *Crossroads at Clarksdale: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Mississippi Delta after World War II* (Chapter Hill, NC 2012). Some of the strong research on Memphis civil rights that briefly mentions the activism in

Fayette and Haywood Counties include Laurie B. Green, *Battling the Plantation Mentality: Memphis and the Black Freedom Struggle* (Memphis, TN 2007), 226-232; Elizabeth Gritter, *River of Hope: Black Politics and the Memphis Freedom Movement, 1865-1954* (Lexington, KY 2014); Elizabeth Gritter, *Memphis Voices: Oral Histories on Race Relations, Civil Rights, and Politics* (New Albany, NY 2016), 171-172; Michael K. Honey, *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign* (New York, NY and London 2007), 56; Bobby L. Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History* (Knoxville, TN 2005). Dowd and Nichols (eds), *Step By Step*, 20; Couto, *Lifting the Veil*, xvii; Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, 130; Couto, *Lifting the Veil*, xvii; Green, *Battling the Plantation Mentality*, 226. For more on racial demographics in the area, see Bond, "Race, Place, and Family," 21; Wesley C. Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America* (Chapel Hill, NC 2007), 327 (n. 20); Green, *Battling the Plantation Mentality*, 226; Gritter, *River of Hope*, 213.

7 Wynn, "Toward a Perfect Democracy," 209. See also Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee*, 269-279. Couto, *Lifting the Veil*, 117, 142-146; Viola McFerren, "Viola McFerren on Trouble Registering," (n.d.). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TrzUGpnH18 (accessed 5 March 2020) [first quotation]; Bond, "Race, Place, and Family," 8. Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 4. "Fayette Timeline – 1959," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1959.php (accessed 5 March 2020); Couto, *Lifting the Veil*, 131. "Background Information on Fayette County," (n.d.), Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC; Letter from Charlie Butts to Bob Kohn, 1 April 1961, Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC. "Tent City," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 9A, Box 6, TCC [second quotation].

8 Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 66. This was the fourth such case that the Justice Department settled. See "Fayette Timeline – 1959," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1959.php (accessed 5 March 2020). The case was eventually settled in April 1960 in favor of the black sharecroppers. See David J. Garrow, *Protest At Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Voting Rights Act of 1965* (New Haven, CT 1978), 13.

9 The Fayette County Civic and Welfare League was chartered in spring 1959. See Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 5. Joanne Grant, *Black Protest: 350 Years of History, Documents, and Analyses* (New York, NY 1968), 274-277; Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 277; "Fayette Timeline – 1960," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1960.php (accessed 5 March 2020). John McFerren and Harpman Jameson were part of this group. See Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 6, 7, 20, 29.

10 Felicia Kornbluh, "Food as a Civil Right: Hunger, Work, and Welfare in the South after the Civil Rights Act," *Labor Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas,* 12, no. 1-2 (2015): 135-158, specifically 137. "News from the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League, Inc.," 14 March 1961, Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC. Letter from R. B. J. Campbelle, Jr. to John McFerren, 23 March 1961, Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC; Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, "Operation Bootstrap," (n.d.), Box 1, TCC. "News from the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League, Inc.," 14 March 1961, Folder 42: OFCWL, 1961, Box 1, TCC [quotation from this source]; Dowd and Nichols, eds., *Step By Step*, 29.

11 There is an extensive literature on the impact of the Cold War on civil rights reform. See especially Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line* (Cambridge, MA 2003); Penny M. von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, NY 2014). "Civil Rights Subcabinet Group, White House Meeting," 14 April 1961, Folder: Human Rights- General, 1961 – 20 January-10 May, Box 358, Series 22: Human Rights (HU), White House Central Subject Files #6.1 (John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston; hereinafter cited as JFKPLM) [first quotation]. "Cold War in Fayette County," *Ebony Magazine*, 15, no. 11 (September 1960): 27-34. The minister was Rev. Mr. Clarence T. R. Nelson. See "Fear New 'Tent City' In Haywood," *The Chicago Daily Defender* (28 November 1961), p. 3 [second quotation].

12 Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 74; Jacque Hillman, "The Way It Was: Husband shot while he lay in bed," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 8A, Box 6, TCC; Jacque Hillman, "The Way It Was: Sheriff: 'Far as I know, there wasn't any trouble'," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 8A, Box 6, TCC; Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 277. "Fayette Timeline – 1960," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1960.php (accessed 5 March 2020). Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 9 [first quotation]. "Fayette Gets Surplus Food," *The Chicago Defender* (31 July 1961), p. 9 [second quotation].

13 Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 94, 96, 100-102. Bond, "Race, Place, and Family," 160, 108-109, 104-105.

15 Letter from Dick [most likely Haley] to Gordon [most likely Carey], 16 January 1961, Folder 2: CORE records, 1945-1966, Box 16: Acc. 2014-02, TCC; "Summary of Civil Rights Progress For the Nine Months – January 20 Through October 19," (n.d.), Folder: Human Rights- Executive, 1961- 16 November-31 December, Box 358, Series 22: Human Rights

(HU), White House Central Subject Files, JFKPLM; "Summary of Present Civil Rights Programs Within Executive Branch" sent to Louis Martin, Andrew Hatcher, and Harris Wofford by Frederick G. Dutton, 8 July 1961, Folder: Human Rights- Executive, 1961- 11 May-15 November, Box 358, Series 22: Human Rights (HU), White House Central Subject Files, JFKPLM; Memorandums sent to: Mr. Burke Marshall (The Attorney General), Mr. Wilbur Cohen (The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare), Mr. Arthur Chapin (The Secretary of Labor), Mr. Herbert Klotz (The Secretary of Commerce), Mr. Thomas Hughes (The Secretary of Agriculture) from Frank D. Reeves, Special Assistant to the President, 13 March 1961, Folder: Human Rights- 2- Equality of Races- Executive, 1961- 25 January- 10 April, Box 359, Series 22: Human Rights (HU), White House Central Subject Files, JFKPLM; Rubye L. Penermon, "Courageous Residents Of Fayette County Work To Build A Dream," *The Chicago Daily Defender* (10 July 1961), p. 4; Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee*, 271; Folder 2: CORE records, 1945-1966, Box 16: Acc. 2014-02, TCC.

16 Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 177, 179, 181. These organizations included SNCC, NAACP, SCLC, CORE, and two grassroots community groups. Len Holt, *The Summer That Didn't End* (London 1966), 31. "Negroes Cheered By Eviction Curb: Families in a Tent Village Rejoice, but Landowners Charge Interference," *The New York Times* (31 December 1960), p. 33 [first quotation]; John Lewis and Michael D'Orso, *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement* (New York, NY 1998), 177. "Fayette Timeline – 1960," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1960.php (accessed 5 March 2020); Rubye L. Penermon, "Courageous Residents Of Fayette County Work To Build A Dream," *The Chicago Daily Defender* (10 July 1961), p. 4; "Sharecroppers Aided: Unions Here Send Ten Tons of Supplies to Tent City," *The New York Times* (16 February 1961), p.

22; "Evicted Negroes Aided: Clothing for Their Children Is Shipped to Tennessee," *The New York Times* (24 January 1961), p. 15; "March on Polls," *The Student Voice*, Supplementary Election Issue 1960, Wisconsin Historical Society Library Microforms Room, N71-508, p. 2. Available at: http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll2/id/50279 (accessed 14 October 2019) in the Freedom Summer Digital Collection, WHS. "AFL-CIO To Grant Funds To 'Tent City' Families," *The Chicago Defender* (1 June 1961), p. 6 [second quotation].

17 Letter from Anne Braden to Jim [Dombrowski], 15 February 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [first quotation, original emphasis]. Casey and Tom Hayden delivered the food drive donations in January 1961. "Sit-Ins Near Anniversary; 'Freedom City' Drive On," *The Student Voice*, Vol. II, No. I, January 1961, Wisconsin Historical Society Library Microforms Room, N82-521, p.1. Available at: http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll2/id/50279 (accessed 14 October 2019) in the Freedom Summer Digital Collection, WHS; Account by Casey Hayden in Constance Curry, Joan C. Browning, Dorothy Dawson Burlage, Penny Patch, Theresa Del Pozzo, Sue Thrasher, Elaine Delott Baker, Emmie Schrader Adams, Casey Hayden, eds., *Deep in Our Hearts: Nine White Women in the Freedom Movement* (Athens, GA and London 2000), 342-343. Account by Mildred Forman Page in Faith S. Holsaert, Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young, and Dorothy M. Zellner, eds., *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield, IL 2010), 53; Account by Martha Prescod Norman Noonan in *ibid*., 486-487. Letter from Minnie Jameson to Virgie Hortenstine, 8 August 1963, Folder 22: Thornberry, package 6 (Minnie Jameson), Box 13, TCC. Letter to [C.] Conrad Browne from Debby Rib, 16 May 1965, Folder 10: Fayette Co. Student Union, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS; "WATS

LINE PROCEDURES," (n.d.), Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. Browne came to Highlander in July 1963 as associate director from Koinonia Farm in Americus, Georgia. [John M. Glen, *Highlander: No Ordinary School, 1932-1962* (Lexington, KY 1988), 211.] Letter from Pat Griffith referring to letter from Danny Beagle, 21 January 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [second quotation]. Letter from Debby Rib to John Killens, 22 February 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [third quotation]; Letter from Debby Rib to friends of West Tennessee Voters Project, 15 March 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [fourth quotation].

[18] Virgie Bernhardt Hortenstine, "Fayette County Blacks: Still the Nonviolent Doves," unknown publication (n.d.), Folder 18: Thornberry, Package 2 (Fayette County package), Box 13, TCC. "Students Find Sharecroppers Still Being Evicted In Tenn.," *The Call & Post* (23 February 1963), Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS; Drew Pearson, "The Washington Merry-Go-Round: When Civil Rights Didn't Work," *The Washington Post* (11 August 1964), p. B27.

[19] For more on this shift in activism, please see Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee,* 285.

[20] Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 186, 178. "'Tent City' Aid Group Arrested," *The Chicago Daily Defender* (6 February 1961), p. 2 [first quotation]. Moses would go on to work for SNCC and was one of three authors for the "Free Southern Theater" SNCC activists wrote in 1964. ["A General Prospectus for the Establishment of a Free Southern Theater," 1964, Folder 12, Box 2, Howard Zinn Papers, 1956-1964 (Mss 588); "Freedom School Data," September 1964, Folder 1, Box 15, Social Action Vertical File: Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) Papers, WHS.] Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement,* 285. The

minister was Rev. Ernest R. Bromley. Memorandum for John Seigenthaler from Frederick G. Dutton, 20 November 1961 with 17 November 1961 account from Mary Rawlins, Folder: Human Rights- 2- ST 40- South Carolina – ST 51- General, Box 369, Series 22: Human Rights (HU), White House Central Subject Files, JFKPLM [second quotation].

21 Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 187-198; Viola McFerren, "Viola McFerren on Operation Freedom," (n.d.). Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0u_FshpfTc&list=PLcEKoc6TtUCLp_chHVcybZe1F8vmSn6Pf&index=13&t=0s (accessed 5 March 2020). Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, 286.

22 Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 198. For more on Hortenstine, see Virgie Hortenstine, "Report on visits with eight ministers," 6 October 1961, Box 5, Carl and Anne Braden Papers (MS.0425), University of Tennessee Libraries, Knoxville, Betsey B. Creekmore Special Collections and University Archives; "Outside Activists: Virgie Hortenstine," *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*, (n.d.). Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside.php (accessed 5 March 2020); Virgie Hortenstine, *The Fayette-Haywood Workcamps Newsletter* no. 38, 7 December 1971, Box 18: Fayette County (Tennessee) Workcamp Project, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), WHS. Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 36. News memo from Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc. (SCEF), 4 May 1965, Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS; Roy B. Hamilton, "'Outsiders' Tell Why They Face Risks To Help West Tennessee Vote Drive," *The Memphis Press-Scimitar* (29 July 1965), Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S.

Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS; "News from Fayette Co. Workcamps Project," 25 May 1963, Box 50: Tennessee- West Tennessee, Fayette and Haywood Counties, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS; "News Release for Fayette County Workcamps," 20 July 1963, Box 18: Fayette County (Tennessee) Workcamp Project, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS.

23 Lisa Anderson Todd, *For a Voice and the Vote: My Journey with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party* (Lexington, KY 2014), 73 [quotation]; Civil Rights History Project, U.S., Emilye Crosby, and Lisa Anderson Todd. Todd, Lisa Anderson, 6/14/2013, Civil Rights History Project Collection - American Folklife Center, Library of Congress & Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/afc2010039.afc2010039_crhp0093. George Sutton, "Memphis Student Discredits Cornell Civil Rights Group," *The Commercial Appeal* (30 September [no year]), Folder: Clippings, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS. Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 222-223, 227, 243; Haynie and Miller, eds., *A Memoir of the New Left*, 52-53. Also known as "Cornell-Tompkins County Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Fayette County, Tennessee" or more simply, the "Cornell-Tompkins effort" in Richard L. Saunders' PhD thesis on the voter registration drives in Fayette and Haywood Counties. "2 U.W. Students Take Part In Tennessee Rights Test," *The Capital Times* (5 May 1965), Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS; Richard Reeves, "Parents: Protect Rights Workers," *The New York Herald Tribune* (2 August 1965), Folder: Clippings, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS; Don McLeod, "Somerville Rights Group Seen Easing Campaign," *The Tennessean* (22 August 1965), Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information,

1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS. Dowd and Nichols, eds., *Step By Step*, 9; "The Movement and Its Legacy: A Panel Discussion with Civil Rights Veterans," Wisconsin Historical Society, 17 April 2014. Available at: https://vimeo.com/92429752 (accessed 5 March 2020); "Outside Activists: Robert and Vicki Gabriner," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside.php (accessed 5 March 2020); "Outside Activists: Danny Beagle on Fayette County," (n.d.) *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*. Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside.php (accessed 5 March 2020). "An Appeal to the Wisconsin State Historical Society from The West Tennessee Voters' Project," (n.d.), Folder 5: Fayette County, TN- Politics and Voting, 1964-1965 (2 of 2), Box 10, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS. "Police Security Squad Conducting Probe: Two Rights Workers Charge 'Insults'," *The Memphis Press-Scimitar* (24 August 1965), Folder: Clippings, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS; Interview of Robert Gabriner, 22 May 1966, Robert and Vicki Gabriner Papers, 1964-1966, 840A/2, WHS; Interview of Vicki Gabriner, 22 May 1966, Robert and Vicki Gabriner Papers, 1964-1966, 840A/1, WHS.

24 Letter to Bob Gabriner from Michael Tobin, 30 April 1965, Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS; Letter to Bob Gabriner from Michael Tobin, 6 May 1965, Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives

Division, WHS [quotation]; Letter to Bob Gabriner from Deborah Cohen, 8 April 1965, Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS.

25 The schools included: The University of Michigan, The University of Illinois, The University of Chicago, The University of Southern Illinois, Haverford College (Pennsylvania), Smith College (Massachusetts), Swarthmore College (Pennsylvania), Wooster College (Ohio), Sarah Lawrence College (New York), Western College (Ohio), Florence State College (Alabama), Colorado State Teachers College, Oberlin College (Ohio), Harvard University, Nashville, Tennessee schools, and Cornell University. See "News from Fayette Co. Workcamps Project," 25 May 1963, Box 50- Tennessee- West Tennessee, Fayette and Haywood Counties, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS; Roy B. Hamilton, "'Outsiders' Tell Why They Face Risks To Help West Tennessee Vote Drive," *The Memphis Press-Scimitar* (29 July 1965), Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS; "Viola McFerren Talks About the Outside Activists," *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*, (n.d.). Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside-activists.php (accessed 5 March 2020); "Students Find Sharecroppers Still Being Evicted In Tenn.," *The Call & Post* (23 February 1963), Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS. For more on comparable engagement by northern students in southern civil rights efforts, see Wesley Hogan, "How Democracy Travels: SNCC, Swarthmore Students, and the Growth of the Student Movement in the North, 1961-1964,"

The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 126, no. 3 (July 2002): 437-470. Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 201; Daniel S. Beagle, Robert S. Gabriner, and Vicki Gabriner, "A Brief Proposal For a Political Action Project in West Tennessee," (n.d.) [likely fall-winter 1964], Folder 1: Addresses, Staff, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS [quotation].

[26] Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 209-210 [first and second quotations on 210]. "White and Colored Workcampers Being Harassed In Tennessee," *The Chicago Defender* (17 August 1963), p. 9; Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 211, 209; Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 95, 37 [third quotation].

[27] "Whites Attack Sit-In Students in Fayette Drive," *The Student Voice*, Vol. IV, No. II, 2 August 1963, Wisconsin Historical Society Library Microforms Room, N82-521, p. 4. Available at: http://cdm15932.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll2/id/50279 (accessed 14 October 2019) in the Freedom Summer Digital Collection, WHS. Saunders, "Encouraged By a Little Progress," 214-215, 211; "White and Colored Workcampers Being Harassed In Tennessee," *The Chicago Defender* (17 August 1963), p. 9.

[28] The counties were, namely, Haywood, Hardeman, Tipton, and Shelby. Haynie and Miller, eds., *A Memoir of the New Left*, 74; Dowd and Nichols, eds., *Step By Step*, 37; Drew Pearson, "The Washington Merry-Go-Round: When Civil Rights Didn't Work," *The Washington Post* (11 August 1964), p. B27. Letter from Bob and Vicki Gabriner to family/friends [called the Gabriner Gazette], 29 June 1964, Folder 3: Gabriner, Vicki, Box 13, TCC; Letter from Bob and Vicki Gabriner to family/friends [called the Gabriner Gazette], 6 July 1964, Folder 3: Gabriner, Vicki, Box 13, TCC [quotation]; Letter from Debby Rib to friends of West Tennessee Voters Project, 15 March 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC; Letter from Bob and Vicki Gabriner to family/friends [called the Gabriner Gazette], 18 July 1964, Folder 3: Gabriner, Vicki, Box 13, TCC.

[29] "Time to Vote: Now Registered, Time to Vote…," Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee, https://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/issues/time-vote.php. Letter from Bob and Vicki Gabriner to family/friends [called the Gabriner Gazette], 18 July 1964, Folder 3: Gabriner, Vicki, Box 13, TCC; "Election in Tennessee to Test Negro Voting Power," *The New York Times* (July 20, 1964), 13. Redfearn had run previously for county government in 1960. ["Tent City," *The Jackson Sun* (18 October 2000), 8A, Box 6, TCC.] "Fayette Timeline: 1964, June, 1964," (n.d.) Available at: https://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/movement/fayette-timeline-1964.php (accessed 5 March 2020). Letter from Debby Rib to Charles Haynie, 15 October 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1, Box 13, TCC; Letter from Debby Rib to Anne Braden, 13 November 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1, Box 13, TCC.

[30] The Fayette activists who traveled to Chicago were Square Mormon, Herbert Bonner, Duke Hardaway, and Robert and Maggie Mae Horton. Letter from Debby Rib to Charles Haynie, 15 October 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1 Box 13, TCC; Letter from Debby Rib to Anne Braden, 13 November 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1, Box 13, TCC; Letter from Debby Rib to unknown, 15 November 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1, Box 13, TCC; Correspondence with Whitworth Stokes, Jr. in author's possession, 25 August 2019; Correspondence with Whitworth Stokes, Jr. in author's possession, 11 July 2019; Letter to Whitworth Stokes from Douglas Dowd, 19 August 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC. For more on the MFDP, please see Chris Danielson, *After Freedom Summer: How Race Realigned Mississippi Politics, 1965-1986* (Tallahassee, FL 2011), 15; Steven F. Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969* (Lanham, MD 1999), 300-301; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black*

Awakening of the 1960s (Cambridge, MA and London 1981), 123-129; John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana and Chicago, IL 1994), 272-302.

[31] Gritter, *Memphis Voices*, 172. On the long traditions of black armed self-defense, see especially Akinyele Omowale Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement* (New York, NY and London 2013); Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill, NC 1999); Simon Wendt, *The Spirit and the Shotgun: Armed Resistance and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Gainesville, FL 2007); Stephen Tuck, *We Ain't What We Ought To Be: The Black Freedom Struggle from Emancipation to Obama* (Cambridge, MA and London 2010); Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000* (New York, NY 2001). John McFerren #27, p. 41, Folder 11: Fayette County Interview Project, tape 03, Box 13, TCC [first quotation]; Excerpt from John Frank Bond's testimony, "Excerpts from Haywood County School Hearings, recorded by Virgie Hortenstine," 12 June 1967, p. 9, Folder 89: *US v. HCBE* hearings, Box 16, TCC [second quotation]; "Violence," (n.d.), Folder 6: American South: Fayette County, N.D., Box 7, Series II: Writings and related, 1944-1983, Marjory Collins Papers, 1904-1985 (MC 682), Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts [third quotation]. "West Tennessee Voters' Project Fund Appeal," (n.d.), Folder 2: Fayette County, TN- Voter's Project Information, 1964-1967 (3 of 3), Box 11, Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS; News Release from Fayette County Workcamps, 9 August 1963, Box 50: Tennessee- West Tennessee, Fayette and Haywood Counties, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS; News Release from Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, "Deputy Breaks Up Demonstration In Somerville, Tenn.: Tear Gas Thrown At Negroes; White Throws Linement

[*sic*]," 23 July 1963, Box 50: Tennessee- West Tennessee, Fayette and Haywood Counties, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. News memo from Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc., 4 May 1965, Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS [fourth quotation]. Account by Casey Hayden in Holsaert, Noonan, Richardson, Robinson, Young, and Zellner, eds., *Hands on the Freedom Plow*, 387 [fifth quotation]; Account by Casey Hayden in Curry, Browning, Burlage, Patch, Del Pozzo, Thrasher, Baker, Adams, Hayden, eds., *Deep in Our Hearts*, 342-343; "SNCC One Year Old," *The Student Voice*, Vol. II, No. IV and V, April and May 1961, Wisconsin Historical Society Library Microforms Room, N82-521, p. 2.

32 News memo from Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc., 4 May 1965, Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS; "Attacks on Young Civil Rights Workers in Somerville, Tenn.," May 1965, Folder 6: West Tennessee, General, 1960-1965, Box 64, Part 1: Sub-series: Southern Conference Educational Files, 1954-1972, Carl and Anne Braden Papers, 1928-2006 (Mss 6), Archives Division, WHS [first quotation]. Fayette County Student Union members looked to a similar group in Holly Springs, Mississippi in February 1965 for advice and ideas in forming their organization. Youth from the Holly Springs Student Union came to Fayette in May 1965 to join in protests there. Letter to Ken Scudder of Holly Springs Student Union, affiliated with COFO, in Holly Springs, Mississippi, from O. D. Harris, George Edward Towles, and James Wesley Gray, 8 February 1965, Folder 10: Fayette Co. Student Union, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS; WATS Report, 1 May 1965, p. 2, Box 48: WATS Reports, 1964-1965, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002

(Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. Hamburger, ed., *Our Portion of Hell*, 95-96 [second quotation on 95]. "Tenn. Groups To Test Public Accommodations," *The Chicago Daily Defender* (3 May 1965), p. 3.

33 WATS Report 109, 24 June 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, 1964-1965, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS [first quotation]. WATS Report 113, 30 June 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, 1964-1965, Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS [second quotation].

34 There were reportedly twenty to thirty members of the Tennessee National Guard involved. WATS Report 122, 10 July 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS; WATS Report 124, 12 July 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS.

35 Incorrectly identified as Cummington in the report. "This letter was received by Doug Dowd from Judy Miller, Cornell '66, from Covington, Tennessee jail (Tipton County), dated July 19 & 20, 1965," Box 10, Folder 5: Fayette County, TN- Politics and Voting, 1964-1965 (1 of 2), Series: Subject Files, Sub-series: African Americans, Robert S. Gabriner Papers, 1961-1981 (Mss 575), Archives Division, WHS [quotation from this source]. WATS Report 134 F, p. 1, 25 July 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS.

36 WATS Report, 2 August 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. WATS Report 131, 29 July 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. The quote is from the WATS Report, not a direct quote from County Judge Paul Sommers. WATS Report 145, p. 2, 9 August 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File,

circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. WATS Report 149, p. 2, 16 August 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS. Different accounts give the number of demonstrators as 400 or 200. Couto, *Lifting the Veil*, 215 [quotation from this source].

37 The three students were James Amory from Lancaster, Pennsylvania who was hit in the head with a lead pipe on 20 July, Douglas Korty, a student at the University of Wisconsin from Cleveland, Ohio who sustained a broken jaw on 24 July in Brownsville, and Stephen Gins from Island Park, Long Island who was attacked but was said to not have sustained serious injury. WATS Report 134 F, p. 1, 25 July 1965, Box 48: WATS Reports, June-Aug. 1965 [SNCC], Social Action Vertical File, circa 1930-2002 (Mss 577), Archives Division, WHS; Richard Reeves, "Parents: Protect Rights Workers," *The New York Herald Tribune* (2 August 1965), Folder: Clippings, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS; "Civil Rights Group Seeks Protection," *The Ithaca Journal* (5 August 1965), Folder: Clippings, West Tennessee Voters Project (Mss 245), Archives Division, WHS [quotation from this source].

38 Tuck, *We Ain't What We Ought To Be*; Fairclough, *Better Day Coming*. Martin Ochs, "Working With the Whites in Somerville," *The Chattanooga Times* (12 August 1965), Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [first and third quotations]. Interview of Vicki Gabriner, 840A/1, 22 May 1966, Robert and Vicki Gabriner Papers, 1964-1966, WHS [second quotation]. WATS Reports, #119, Wednesday, 7 July 1965, Folder 24: Thornberry: WTVP 2, Box 13, TCC [fourth quotation]. Letter from Debby Rib to Charlie Haynie, 26 October 1964, Folder 23: Thornberry: WTVP, West Tennessee Voters Project, 1, Box 13, TCC [fifth quotation, original emphasis]. Haynie, *A Memoir of the New Left*, 77 [sixth quotation].

[39] "Looking Back On Twelve Years," 12th Annual Tea Program, 5 December 1971, Folder 47, Box 13, TCC; Jacque Hillman, "The Way It Was: Born into poverty, she led fight for civil rights," *The Jackson Sun*, 18 October 2000, 9A, Box 6, TCC; Betty Cooper, "Editorial: Progress Toward Black and White Understanding," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 37, 18 June 1971, p. 3, Hansel Additions, 1st Contribution, Box 6, TCC; Square Mormon, "Black Movement Splits," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 34, 23 March 1970, p. 3-4, Box 6, TCC; Ronnie Pennel, "Is There Black Militancy in Haywood County? A white teacher in all-black Carver High speaks up.," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 31, 14 June 1969, p. 1 and 14, Box 6, TCC; Ronnie Pennel, "White Teacher Loses Job," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 32, 14 October 1969, p. 5, Box 6, TCC; "What Carver High Students Said," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 31, 14 June 1969, p. 1 and 14, Box 6, TCC; Jennifer Dowley, "Black Power," *Fayette-Haywood Newsletter*, No. 28, 27 September 1968, Box 6, TCC; "Negro Leader Favors Pattat For Sheriff," *The Fayette Falcon*, 2 July 1964, p. 1 and unknown, Folder 18: Thornberry, Package 2 (Fayette County package), Box 13, TCC; Virgie Bernhardt Hortenstine, "Fayette County Blacks: Still the Nonviolent Doves," unknown publication, n.d., Folder 18: Thornberry, Package 2 (Fayette County package), Box 13, TCC.

[40] Please see the Gabriners' personal papers at the Wisconsin Historical Society and Haynie's memoir, *A Memoir of the New Left*, for more information. The Fayette County Student Union members who published the newspaper were Eva Mavlin, Sadie Puckett (now Harris), and Jerry and Pepper Jenkins. "Outside Activists: Tim Hall," *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*, (n.d.). Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside.php#tim-hall (accessed 5 March 2020). "Outside Activists: Dean Hansell," *Tent City: Stories of Civil Rights in Fayette County, Tennessee*, (n.d.). Available at: http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity/people/outside.php#dean-hansell (accessed 5 March 2020).